

Montana Department of  
Public Health & Human Services

Section:

**Best Beginnings Quality Child Care Initiatives**

**CHILD CARE**

Subject:

**Infant Toddler Mini-Grants**

**Supersedes:** Child Care 7-3 (10/1/99)

**References:** 45 CFR Part 98.51 (b) (2) (ii)

**General  
Information**

The Best Beginnings Infant and Toddler Mini Grants will be awarded from the Infant Toddler Earmark Quality monies. These mini grants are designed to cover cost of Infant Toddler Training, Infant Toddler developmentally appropriate equipment, supplies, and/or meeting Infant Toddler regulatory requirements.

The goal of the Infant/Toddler Mini Grant is to improve the quality of care available for infants and toddlers.

Infant and Toddler Mini Grants are for providers who need funds to:

- ☐ Replace or acquire infant toddler equipment;
- ☐ Purchase developmentally appropriate infant toddler toys and/or supplies;
- ☐ Meet regulatory requirements for caring of infants and toddlers, e.g. install sink next to diaper changing area; or
- ☐ Hire substitute care, to enable the provider/or staff to attend infant toddler training, conferences, etc.

**Infant/Toddler  
Mini-Grant  
Program  
Description &  
Expectations**

Applications must be complete.

- ☐ The narrative must include an overview and explanation of any enhancements in providing care for infants and toddlers.
- ☐ Funds received under this grant must not be used to pay personnel expenses other than substitute care to enable the provider and/or staff to attend infant/toddler trainings, conferences.
- ☐ Funds may not be used for televisions.
- ☐ In selecting providers to receive awards, a higher priority will be given to providers who are serving infants and toddlers under the State's Best Beginnings Scholarship Program and to providers who have not previously been funded under the DPHHS Provider Grants Program and/or the Infant Toddler Demonstration Project.
- ☐ Providers who are awarded a Best Beginnings Infant Toddler Mini Grant must agree to remain in business as a current licensed or registered provider for 12 months from date of award or return all grant funds.

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- Providers must not discriminate against children based on race, national origin, ethnic background, handicap, sex or religion.
- Providers who do not receive a grant may reapply the next quarter. The second page of the application may be used as a communication tool for asking questions and receiving feedback on a proposal. The ECSB will respond to in writing to inquiries received in writing.

**NOTE:** Possible denial reasons: currently participating in the Best Beginnings Provider Grant program; low narrative score; not an active member of the Montana Early Care and Education Practitioner Registry; and/or incomplete application.

#### **Who May Apply**

- Established licensed or registered child care providers who are caring for or planning to care for infants and toddlers, or
- Groups or individuals interested in establishing a new licensed/registered child care facility caring for infants and toddlers. Child Care providers must be licensed or registered before grant funds are released.

Additionally,

- Providers need to be active participants on the Montana Early Care and Education Practitioner Registry at any level on the Career Path. A copy of the registry certificate must be included with the Infant and Toddler Mini Grant application.
- Providers who have been disqualified with cause from the Child Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) are not eligible to apply for a Best Beginnings Infant Toddler Mini Grant.

#### **Deadlines:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> quarter – October 1 through December 31 of each year. All I/T mini grant applications for 1<sup>st</sup> quarter consideration must be postmarked no later than September 1.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter – January 1 through March 31 of each year. All I/T mini grant applications for 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter consideration must be postmarked no later than December 1.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter – April 1 through June 30 of each year. All I/T mini grant applications for 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter consideration must be postmarked no later than March 1.

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4<sup>th</sup> quarter – July 1 through September 30 of each year. All I/T mini grant applications for 4<sup>th</sup> quarter consideration must be postmarked no later than June 1.

**Maximum Grant Awards** The maximum amount awarded for any Infant Toddler Mini Grants will be:

- ☐ \$1,500 for a Licensed Child Care Center;
- ☐ \$1,000 for a Group Child Care Home; or
- ☐ \$1,000 for a Family Child Care Home.

**Invoicing for Payment**

The award payment will be made on a one-time reimbursement basis only. Expenditures prior to the time the grant was awarded are not allowed.

A summary form will be sent with the provider's award notice. This summary form is to be completed and returned with receipts to the Early Childhood Services Bureau for reimbursement.

Best Beginnings Infant/Toddler Mini Grants will be payable up to one year from the date of the award.

**CCUBS Process**

1. Upon receipt of an application, ECSB Contract Specialist will check to verify the applicant is entered as a Person and as a Provider in the CCUBS system. Review the 'Provider' screen to ensure the address matches the W-9 that was submitted with the Infant Toddler Mini Grant application. If the applicant is not entered as a Person in CCUBS, the ECSB will enter this information based on the Infant Toddler Mini Grant application and W-9.

**NOTE: When navigating in CCUBS on the Contract Application screen, use the TAB key on the computer keyboard to move from box to box.**

2. Applications are logged in on the CCUBS system when they are received in the ECSB office. This is done by entering information on the 'Contract Application' screen.

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Applicant ID: The applicant's PV #;  
 Fed Fiscal Year: The appropriate federal fiscal year;  
 Application Date: The date that information is being entered into CCUBS;  
 Application Received: The date the application was date stamped;  
 Contract Type: Infant Toddler Mini Grant;  
 Application Status: Use the drop-down menu and select *Received*;  
 Effective Date: The start of the 12-month time period;  
 Denial Reason: Not used to enter in application requests;  
 End Date: The end of the 12-month time period;  
 Proposal Score: Not used to enter in application requests; and  
 Application Checklist:  
     Mark the Training/Project Plan.

3. Applications are prioritized and evaluated for participation in the program. Applications with the highest scores are awarded the mini grant. Approximately 25 mini grants are awarded each quarter. The score is then entered on the Contract Application screen in the CCUBS system and the status is changed to either approved or denied.
4. After the applications have been evaluated, the ECSB Program Specialist will update the 'Contract Application' screen in CCUBS. The 'Application Status' will be changed to either *Approved* or *Denied* and saved. If the status is *Denied*, the Program Specialist will also be required to enter a Denial Reason on the screen.
5. CCUBS will generate and automatically send a denial letter to the applicant.
6. Upon approval of the application, the ECSB Contract Specialist will set up the contract for all approved applicants following the steps below:
  - a. On the 'Contract Application' screen in CCUBS, double click the box in the upper right hand corner labeled *Contract No.* This action will take the worker to the 'Contract screen'.
  - b. On the Contractor tab, enter the PS# of the applicant in the white box under Person ID\* and hit the TAB key.
  - c. On to the Budget tab, put the cursor in the 'Budget Section' box. Select the Infant Toddler Mini Grant from Budget Section drop down menu. **Using the mouse** move the cursor into the 'Budget Item' box and enter the budget items (Budget Items

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may be typed in word-specifically or may be selected from a list using the F9 key):

- ☐ *Ex: Training*, hit the TAB key and type amount.
- ☐ *Complete for each budget item*.
- ☐ *Advances*, hit the TAB key and type in 0.
- ☐ Click on the SAVE icon.

At this point, CCUBS will SAVE the screen with a Contract Number.

- d. On the 'Contract Details' tab select the Contract Status drop down menu: highlight 2. *Negotiation Complete*, and SAVE; highlight 3. *Final In-Route Signatures*, and SAVE; highlight 4. *Mailed*, and SAVE; lastly highlight 5. *Executed*, and SAVE.
7. CCUBS will generate an award letter that must be printed in the ECSB contract office. In CCUBS, Select *Navigate To, Notifications*, Enter the Contract Number and hit *Execute [F8]*. To view the notice, click on *View Notice*. Award letters are sent to the successful applicant along with a Best Beginnings Infant Toddler Mini-Grant Award Summary.

